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Message Text

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PAGE 01 BANGKO 19062 101347Z

46
ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 MC-02 ACDA-05 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02

SS-15 L-03 AID-05 IGA-01 OMB-01 TRSE-00 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 EB-07 EUR-12 PRS-01 PA-01 USIA-06

COME-00 /093 W
---------- 041940
R 101202Z SEP 75
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1085
INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU HI
JCS WASHDC
DIA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
AMEMBASSY BONN
SECDEF WASHDC

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E.O. 11652: N/A
GAGS: MASS, TH
SUBJECT: THAI MANUFACTURED HK-33 RIFLES TO CHILE

1. SHORT FRONT-PAGE ARTICLE IN BANGKOK ENGLISH LANGUAGE, THE NATION SEPTEMBER 10 HEADLINED QUOTE THAI GUNS FOR CHILE UNQUOTE STATES THAT QUOTE THAILAND WILL SUPPLY 4,000 SK-33 (SIC) RIFLES TO THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT THROUGH A GERMAN COMPANY, CABINET DECIDED YESTERDAY UNQUOTE. THESE REFLES ARE TO BE MANUFACTURED (OR ASSEMBLED) BY RTG HECKLER-KOCH PLANT HERE IN BANGKOK. THE ARTICLE ALSO STATES THAT THE RIFLES HAVE BHE SAME QUALITY AS THE U.S. MADE M-16 BUT QUOTE EASIER TO USE, ACCORDING TO AN EXPERT. UNQUOTE.

2. ON THE SAME DATE, THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE BANGKOK POST CARRIED THE HK-33 STORY ON PAGE 3. HEADLINES
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WERE QUOTE GERMAN COMPANY ORDERS WEAPONS FRON HUI

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LAND UNQUOTE. THE STORY INDICATES THAT H-K REQUESTED
THE RIFLES FOR RESALE TO CHILE BUTH GAVE NO REASON
WHY THE H-K TURNED TO THAILAND FOR THIS ORDER WHEN
THE SAME WEAPONS ARE READILY AVAILABLE IN GERMANY.
THE STORY ALSO INDICATED THAT THANKS TO THE GERMAN
ORDER THE RTA HAS DECIDED TO CONTINUE OPERATING THE
BANKOK PLANT BECAUSE CLOSING IT WOULD
RESULT IN UNEMPLOYMENT FOR MANY WORKERS. IT WILL BE THE
FIRST TIME THAILAND HAS SOLD ARMAMENTS ABROAD.

3. AS WE HAVE REPORTED IN THE PAST, THE THAIS ARE
NOT ENTHRALLED WITH THEIR H-K PLANT OR THE H-K 33
RIFLE. IT APPEARS THAT THE GERMANS ARE MAKING AN EFFORT
IN HELPING THAIS KEEP THE PLANT
FUNCTIONNING IN ORDER TO SAVE FACE POSSIBLY
MORE FOR THEMSELVES THAN THE THAI.
WHITEHOUSE

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